

## **XIX.VI. DAVID LIVINGSTONE: I NEVER MADE A SACRIFICE - The Nineteenth Century (pt.6)**

### **Q. ARE YOU READY FOR CHURCH HISTORY?!**

Two questions and answers:

#### **QUESTION 1. What is Church History?**

**ANSWER.** Church history is the story of how Jesus has built his church for his own glory and his peoples' good. **Matthew 16:18** "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

#### **QUESTION 2. Why should we study Church History?**

**ANSWER.** We should learn church history because it is the amazing story of Jesus conquering the nations through his Gospel. **Revelation 6:2** "[Christ] came out conquering, and to conquer."

Today we are going to look at the Nineteenth Century for the 4th time. But before we do that let's remember what we learned last time.

### **Q. Who can tell me the name of the person I taught you about last time?**

- **Everyone say, "John Paton."**

### **Q. Who can tell me something about John Paton?**

## **RECAP**

*In the nineteenth century, God used John Paton to exemplify sacrificial obedience to Christ and a desire to reach the nations for Christ.*

Who can tell me

### **NINETEENTH CENTURY (pt.5) MEMORY VERSE.**

- "I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord" (**Philippians 3:8**).

### **NINETEENTH CENTURY (pt.5) MEMORY QUOTE.**

- "I claimed Aniwa for Jesus, and by the grace of God Aniwa now worships at the Saviour's feet." (**John Paton**).

Now, today I am going to teach you about the Nineteenth Century PART 6 (1,800-1,900).

What happened in the Nineteenth Century (1,800-1,900) that shows us how Christ built His church as He continued to conquer the nations?

## Today I am going to teach you about a man named DAVID LIVINGSTONE (1813–1873).

- **Everyone say, "David Livingstone."**

### HISTORY OF DAVID LIVINGSTONE

**(i)** David Livingstone was born on March 19, 1813, at Blantyre, Lanarkshire, Scotland, the son of Neil and Agnes Livingstone, into a humble but deeply godly home where family worship, Scripture reading, and fervent prayer shaped daily life. LIVINGSTONE WAS BORN INTO A HUMBLE BUT DEEPLY GODLY SCOTTISH HOME.

- **Everyone say, "Livingstone grew up with the Bible as his constant companion and the fear of God in his heart." (Livingstone's Missionary Travels; Christian History Institute)**

**(ii)** As a boy he began work in the cotton mill at age ten, toiling long hours by day while self-teaching Latin, Greek, theology, and medicine at night; he experienced a clear conversion around age twenty and resolved to give his life to Christ as a missionary, eventually qualifying as a doctor and offering himself to the London Missionary Society. LIVINGSTONE TOILED IN THE MILL BY DAY AND STUDIED THE GOSPEL BY NIGHT.

- **Everyone say, "A Scottish lad's heart burned for the lost in Africa's unreached interior." (Livingstone's Missionary Travels; various missionary biographies)**

**(iii)** In 1838 he was accepted by the London Missionary Society, initially hoping for China, but the Opium War and a meeting with Robert Moffat redirected him to Africa's interior; despite warnings of deadly fevers and savage tribes, Livingstone famously resolved, "I will go anywhere, provided it be forward," trusting God to sustain him. LIVINGSTONE ANSWERED THE CALL TO AFRICA'S DARK INTERIOR WITH BOLD FAITH.

- **Everyone say, "Anywhere forward, if only Christ goes with me." (Livingstone's own words; Christian History Institute)**

**(iv)** He arrived in Cape Town on March 14, 1841, and began work among the Bechuanas at Kuruman; in January 1845 he married Mary Moffat, eldest daughter of veteran missionary Robert Moffat, and together they pressed northward to establish mission stations amid scorching heat, tropical fever, and constant danger from wild beasts. LIVINGSTONE BEGAN HIS AFRICAN MISSION AND FOUND A DEVOTED WIFE IN MARY.

- **Everyone say, "Together they carried the gospel where no white man had**

gone before." (Livingstone's Missionary Travels; Wholesome Words biography)

**(v)** In 1843 at Mabotsa a lion crushed his arm in its jaws, shaking him like a terrier shakes a rat, yet God preserved his life; despite the injury, opposition from Boers and Portuguese slavers, and repeated bouts of fever, Livingstone persisted for years, moving missions deeper into the interior and winning a few converts while exploring new paths. LIVINGSTONE ENDURED THE LION'S ATTACK AND CONTINUED UNDAUNTED.

- Everyone say, "The lion could not stop the servant God had called to Africa." (Livingstone's Missionary Travels; Christian History Institute)

**(vi)** In 1852 he sent Mary and their children to Britain for safety and launched his epic transcontinental journey, crossing from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean; in November 1855 he discovered the mighty Victoria Falls, which he named for Queen Victoria, all to open Africa to the gospel, legitimate commerce, and the death-blow to the slave trade. LIVINGSTONE CROSSED AFRICA AND REVEALED ITS WONDERS FOR CHRIST.

- Everyone say, "The smoke of a thousand villages where Christ was unknown drew him onward." (inspired by Moffat; Livingstone's Missionary Travels)

**(vii)** Returning to Britain in 1856 to publish his travels and rally support, he then led the Zambezi Expedition in 1858; in April 1862 his beloved Mary died of fever on the riverbank, leaving Livingstone to bury her beside the Shire and press forward alone, writing in his journal of love deepened by every year together. LIVINGSTONE ENDURED THE GREAT BEREAVEMENT OF MARY'S DEATH.

- Everyone say, "O my Mary, I loved you more with every year; yet Christ still calls me on." (Livingstone's diary; Wholesome Words biography)

**(viii)** Known as the great missionary-explorer and scourge of the slave trade, Livingstone spent over thirty years in Africa's interior and years in Britain, Australia, and elsewhere raising funds, recruits, and awareness; he and Mary had six children (several of whom faced the hardships of missionary life), though they buried some in infancy amid the trials. LIVINGSTONE BECAME THE VOICE FOR AFRICAN MISSIONS AND ABOLITION WORLDWIDE.

- Everyone say, "His life and words stirred thousands to carry Christ and freedom to the Dark Continent." (Livingstone's Missionary Travels; various missionary biographies)

**(ix)** He faced repeated perils—spear attacks, plots by slave traders, shipwrecks on the Zambezi, and debilitating tropical illnesses—yet maintained unwavering trust that the Lord would use every trial for His glory and the good of Africa's people; Livingstone lived to see the slave trade exposed and the gospel carried where it had never been heard. LIVINGSTONE PREACHED AND PRAYED THROUGH DEADLY ADVERSITY TO THE END.

- Everyone say, "Neither fever nor fury could silence the gospel on Livingstone's lips." (various missionary biographies; Desiring God)

### resources)

(x) After Mary's death in 1862, the aging Livingstone launched his final expedition in 1866 to seek the Nile's source and strike at slavery; lost to the outside world for years, he was found by Henry Morton Stanley in 1871, yet refused to leave Africa and continued until May 1, 1873, when he died kneeling in prayer at Chitambo's village in present-day Zambia—his heart buried beneath a tree by faithful African companions. LIVINGSTONE FINISHED HIS COURSE KNEELING IN PRAYER FOR AFRICA.

- Everyone say, "He entered glory on his knees, still pointing the lost to the Savior." (Christian History Institute; Livingstone's Missionary Travels)

(xi) Livingstone's legacy endures as one of the most remarkable missionaries and explorers of the 19th century, demonstrating the power of the gospel to confront slavery, open continents, and transform the darkest regions of Africa; his story of courage, loss, perseverance, and triumph continues to challenge believers to radical obedience, with his writings and example fueling mission zeal long after his death. LIVINGSTONE'S LEGACY IS GOSPEL ADVANCE AND ABOLITION IN AFRICA.

- Everyone say, "Livingstone's footsteps still call the church to the unreached ends of the earth." (John Piper; various missionary biographies)

## INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT DAVID LIVINGSTONE

1. **Livingstone was a child laborer who bought a Latin grammar with his first wages:** Born on 19 March 1813 in a single-room tenement above a cotton factory in Blantyre, Scotland, the second of seven children in a poor but devout family, Livingstone began working 12–14-hour days in the mill at age 10, tying broken threads on spinning machines. With his very first wages, the 10-year-old bought a Latin grammar book and studied late into the night after shifts, demonstrating extraordinary self-discipline that later fueled his medical and theological training.
2. **Livingstone originally destined for China, not Africa:** Deeply influenced by German missionary Karl Gützlaff's appeal for medical missionaries, Livingstone trained specifically to go to China. The First Opium War (1839–1842) made that impossible, so the London Missionary Society redirected him. He met Robert Moffat in London, whose stories of unexplored African interiors captivated him, leading to his 1841 arrival in South Africa.
3. **Livingstone survived a horrific lion attack that left him permanently disabled:** In 1844 at Mabotsa (Botswana), while trying to protect villagers' livestock, a lion attacked Livingstone mid-reload. It crushed his left arm "to splinters," shaking him "as a terrier dog does a rat." The arm

never healed properly (creating a false joint), and he could never raise it above shoulder height again—yet he adapted by firing his rifle from his left shoulder and continued exploring for decades.

4. **Livingstone married his mentor's daughter and raised six children amid constant danger:** In 1845 he wed Mary Moffat (daughter of Robert Moffat). The couple had six children (Robert, Agnes, Thomas, Elizabeth, William Oswell, and Anna Mary). Mary and the children accompanied him on early Kalahari treks, but family separations became necessary due to disease and hardship; Mary later died of malaria in 1862 while rejoining him on the Zambezi Expedition.
5. **Livingstone traveled with his wife and small children across the Kalahari Desert:** In 1849–1851 expeditions, Mary and their young children joined him crossing the Kalahari to reach Lake Ngami and the Zambezi—feats that horrified contemporaries and highlighted the family's extraordinary commitment.
6. **Livingstone was a doctor who survived repeated tropical diseases while treating others:** Trained in medicine at Anderson's University and in London, Livingstone endured countless bouts of malaria, dysentery, and other illnesses (often treating himself with quinine) yet continued mapping, preaching, and doctoring—sometimes performing surgery or delivering babies under dire conditions.
7. **Livingstone was a fluent linguist and cultural respecter who learned Setswana quickly:** He mastered local languages (including Setswana) and immersed himself in African customs, often traveling light with African companions rather than large European parties—earning trust that enabled deeper exploration than many contemporaries achieved.
8. **Livingstone witnessed a slave-trader massacre that intensified his abolitionism:** In July 1871 at Nyangwe (Congo), Livingstone saw Arab-Swahili traders massacre 300–400 Africans (mostly women and children). The trauma, recorded in his journals, fueled his final anti-slavery writings and helped galvanize British public opinion against the East African slave trade.
9. **Livingstone discovered and named Victoria Falls (on the border of Zimbabwe and Zambia):** On 16 November 1855, he became the first European to see the waterfall locals called Mosi-oa-Tunya ("the smoke that thunders"). Overwhelmed, he wrote, "Scenes so lovely must have been gazed upon by angels in their flight," and patriotically renamed it Victoria Falls after Queen Victoria.
10. **Livingstone was the first European to cross the African continent (west to east):** Between 1852 and 1856, with Makololo guides and minimal supplies, Livingstone completed an unprecedented

transcontinental journey from Luanda (Angola) on the Atlantic to Quelimane (Mozambique) on the Indian Ocean—roughly 29,000 miles total across his career—mapping vast unknown regions and proving the interior was traversable.

11. **Livingstone was a bestselling author whose 1857 book sold over 70,000 copies:** *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* blended adventure, science, geography, and anti-slavery advocacy. It made him a household name, earned him financial independence, and inspired countless missionaries and explorers.
12. **Livingstone famously “found” by Henry Morton Stanley with the immortal greeting:** After disappearing for years while seeking the Nile’s source, the ailing Livingstone was located in Ujiji (Tanzania) on 10 November 1871 by journalist-explorer Henry Morton Stanley, who uttered the legendary line, “Dr. Livingstone, I presume?”
13. **His servants carried his body 1,000+ miles after death:** Livingstone died on 1 May 1873 at Chitambo’s village (Zambia), kneeling in prayer from malaria and dysentery. Loyal attendants Chuma and Susi embalmed the body, buried his heart under a tree (as he had requested), and trekked over 1,000 miles to the coast so he could be buried in Westminster Abbey—a testament to the respect he earned from Africans.
14. **Died at 60 but left a legacy that helped end the East African slave trade:** Though his direct missionary conversions were few, his writings, maps, and public campaigns exposed slavery’s horrors, influenced British policy, and paved the way for later missions, education, and healthcare initiatives across central and southern Africa.
15. **Only one recorded personal convert—yet that convert transformed a nation:** Chief Sechele of the Kwena people (Botswana) was Livingstone’s sole documented baptism. He later became a powerful evangelist, translating the Bible and leading widespread Christian conversions among his people—outpacing many European missionaries.

## HISTORICAL SHORT LIST

**Q. What can we learn from David Livingstone?**

*In the nineteenth century, God used David Livingstone to show the power of long obedience in the same direction.*

## THEOLOGY LEARNED FROM DAVID LIVINGSTONE

## I) Livingstone taught us the value of long obedience in the same direction.

**Everyone say, "Livingstone had a long life of obedience."**

- "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (**Philippians 3:14**).
- Livingstone travelled over 30,000 miles in Africa. Mostly on foot because the flies would attack the horse, giving them diseases that led to their death.
- He mapped a lot of Africa and made it possible for future missionaries to travel and take the gospel to the Africans.

## II) Livingstone taught men to be manly and unafraid of even lions.

**Everyone say, "Livingstone fought lions."**

- **Like Joshua said to his men, "Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous"** (Joshua 10:25).

## III) Livingstone taught us that the gospel will be successful.

**Everyone say, "The gospel will be successful."**

- There was one confirmed convert in his entire life in Africa. Now the entire country of Zambia is a Christian nation, with Christianity enshrined in their constitution.

## RECAP

*In the nineteenth century, God used David Livingstone to show the power of long obedience in the same direction.*

## NINETEENTH CENTURY (pt.6) MEMORY VERSE.

- "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (**Philippians 3:14**).

## NINETEENTH CENTURY (pt.6) MEMORY QUOTE.

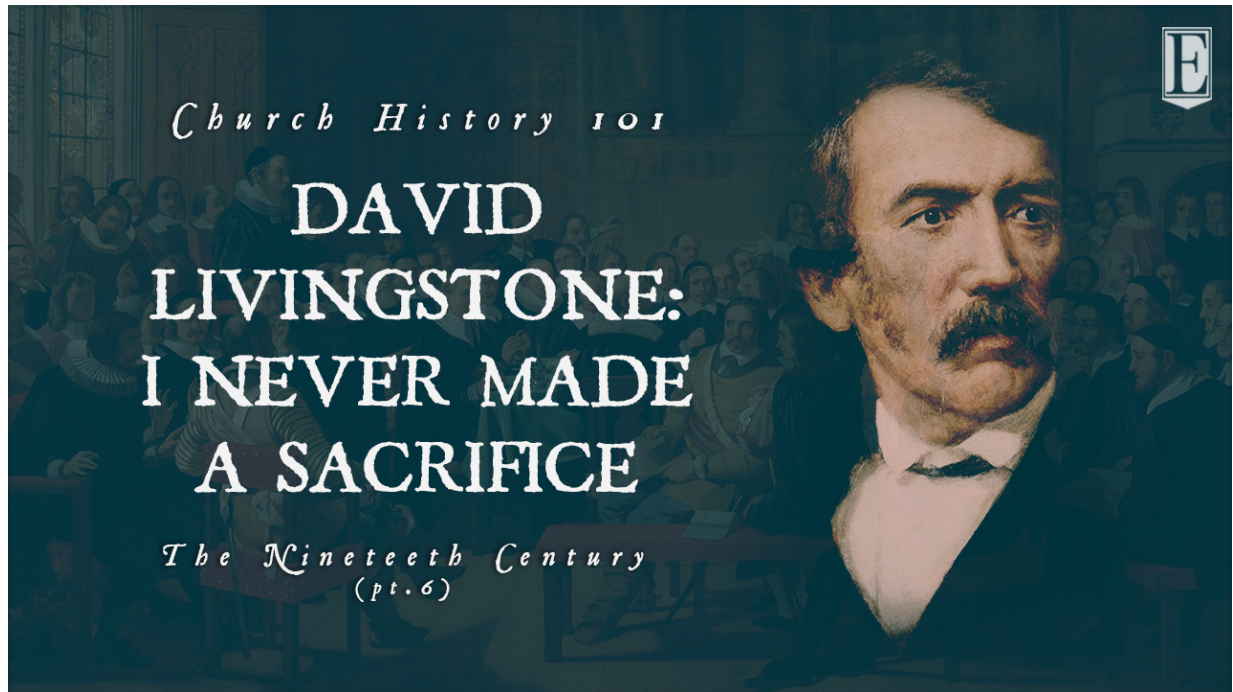
- "Say rather it is a privilege...I never made a sacrifice." (**David Livingstone**).

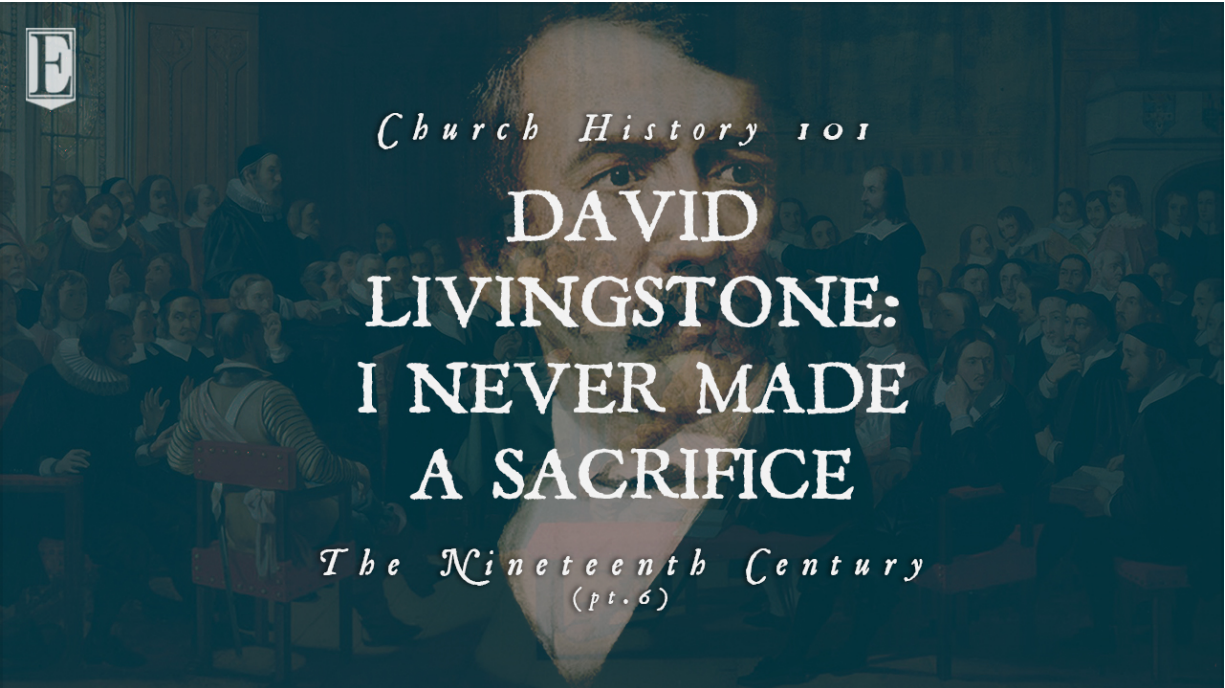
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## FOR FURTHER STUDY

- Dr. David Livingstone: Missionary Explorer to Africa (2011) | Full Movie | Joan Sutherland - <https://youtu.be/VUYxrPE35EQ?si=b767lp9zJDbHX190>
  - Biography of David Livingstone | David Livingston - <https://youtu.be/AzkljHBIXy8?si=GyUsfPI2lpYFfj0m>
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## IMAGE





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## QUOTES BY *DAVID LIVINGSTONE*

### On Faith, Sacrifice, and Missionary Calling

- "People talk of the sacrifice I have made in spending so much of my life in Africa. Can that be called a sacrifice which is simply paid back as a small part of a great debt owing to our God, which we can never repay? ... It is emphatically no sacrifice. Say rather it is a privilege. ... I never made a sacrifice."  
— David Livingstone, *Dr. Livingstone's Cambridge Lectures: Together with a Prefatory Letter by Professor Sedgwick* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co.; London: John Murray, 1858), 23 (speech delivered December 4, 1857).
- "In the glow of love which Christianity inspires, I soon resolved to devote my life to the alleviation of human misery."  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), introduction.
- "The perfect freeness with which the pardon of all our guilt is offered in God's book drew forth feelings of affectionate love to Him who bought us with his blood, and a sense of deep obligation to Him for his mercy has influenced, in some small measure, my conduct ever since."

— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), introduction.

- “The command to ‘go into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature’ must be obeyed by Christians either personally or by substitute.”  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 2.
- “I would earnestly recommend all young missionaries to go at once to the real heathen, and never to be content with what has been made ready to their hands by men of greater enterprise.”  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 6.
- “We believe Christianity to be divine, and equal to all it has to perform; then let the good seed be widely sown, and, no matter to what sect the converts may belong, the harvest will be glorious.”  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 6.

## On Exploration and Africa’s Potential

- “I will go anywhere, provided it be forward.”  
— David Livingstone, *Dr. Livingstone’s Cambridge Lectures: Together with a Prefatory Letter by Professor Sedgwick* (Cambridge: Deighton, Bell, and Co.; London: John Murray, 1858), 23.
- “I felt the pleasure of looking on lands which had never been seen by a European before.”  
David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 12.
- “The mere animal pleasure of traveling in a wild unexplored country is very great.”  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857) (reflected in multiple journey descriptions; echoed in later journals).
- “What a fine country for cattle! My heart is sore to see such fruitful valleys for corn lying waste.” (Makololo companions’ sentiment, which

Livingstone endorsed as he surveyed the land.)

— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 13.

- “My deliberate conviction was and is that the part of the country indicated is as capable of supporting millions of inhabitants as it is of its thousands.”  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 15.
- “I determined to open the country, and we shall see who have been most successful in resolution, they or I.”  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 2.

## On the Slave Trade and Human Suffering

- “And if my disclosures regarding the terrible Ujijian slavery should lead to the suppression of the East Coast slave trade, I shall regard that as a greater matter by far than the discovery of all the Nile sources together.”  
— David Livingstone, letter quoted in *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa, from 1865 to His Death*, ed. Horace Waller, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1874), 1:62 (entry context, June 1866 onward).
- “We passed a slave woman shot or stabbed through the body and lying on the path ... To-day we came upon a man dead from starvation ... some were quite young.”  
— David Livingstone, *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa, from 1865 to His Death*, ed. Horace Waller, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1874), 1:62 (June 27, 1866 entry).
- “The strangest disease I have seen in this country seems really to be broken-heartedness, and it attacks free men who have been captured and made slaves ... They described their only pain in the heart.”  
— David Livingstone, *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa, from 1865 to His Death*, ed. Horace Waller, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1874), 2:352.
- “To overdraw its evil is a simple impossibility.” (Referring to the slave trade.)  
David Livingstone, *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa*,

from *1865 to His Death*, ed. Horace Waller, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1874).

- "All I can say in my solitude is, may Heaven's rich blessing come down on every one—American, English, Turk—who will help to heal this open sore of the world." (Final public appeal against slavery.)  
— David Livingstone, *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa, from 1865 to His Death*, ed. Horace Waller, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1874), 2:417–18 (closing entry).

## On Perseverance, Providence, and Daily Trials

- "I had that confidence in a kind, overruling Providence, which makes such a difference between Christians and both the ancient and modern heathen."  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 1.
- "I could not conscientiously ask them to abandon their defenses for my convenience alone." (On sending his family to England for safety while he continued alone.)  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 13.
- "There is a good deal in not 'giving in' to this disease. He who is low-spirited, and apt to despond at every attack, will die sooner than the man who is not of such a melancholic nature." (On surviving fever.)  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 10.
- "The prospect of passing away from this fair and beautiful world thus came before me in a pretty plain, matter-of-fact form, and it did seem a serious thing to leave wife and children—to break up all connection with earth, and enter on an untried state of existence."  
— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857), chap. 13.
- "I never felt so much grieved by the loss of a black man before; and it was impossible not to follow him in thought into the world of which he had just heard before he was called away." (On the death of Sebituane.)

— David Livingstone, *Missionary Travels and Researches in South Africa* (London: John Murray, 1857).

- "It is not all pleasure this exploration."  
— David Livingstone, *The Last Journals of David Livingstone in Central Africa, from 1865 to His Death*, ed. Horace Waller, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1874), 1:146.

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## QUOTES ABOUT DAVID LIVINGSTONE

- "I shall never forget when I shook the hand of Livingstone. I count it one of the great honors of my life to have known him and even men of the world will join in doing homage to his name. It was the love of Christ that made him tread pathless Africa and die among the heathen! He was not the first by many a thousand who counted it all joy to succumb to climate and to perish among strangers for the Cross of Christ!"  
— Charles Haddon Spurgeon, "Is It Nothing To You?," sermon delivered September 11, 1881, in *The Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit: Sermons Preached and Revised by C. H. Spurgeon During the Year 1881*, vol. 27 (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1881), [sermon text in the second head, "The Sufferings of Jesus Have Had a Deep Interest in Them for Many"].
- "God has taken away the greatest man of his generation, for Dr. Livingstone stood alone."  
— Florence Nightingale, letter to Livingstone's daughter (1873), quoted in *David Livingstone* resources and contemporary accounts (e.g., Wholesome Words biography and CS Lewis Institute tribute).
- "I have not found it necessary to revise my opinion, formed many years ago, that the two great men of the nineteenth century were Abraham Lincoln and David Livingstone."  
— Stephen Neill, as cited in multiple biographical assessments of Livingstone's legacy.
- "[Livingstone] remains essentially, I think, a great and unique person." And: "If I have laid the accent on failure, it is because somewhere within that failure lies the essence of his triumph."  
— Cecil Northcott, *David Livingstone: His Triumph, Decline, and Fall* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1973), as excerpted in scholarly tributes.

- “His life and writings show a respect for Africans and African personality unusual at the time, and his confidence never wavered in African capacities and in the common humanity of African and European.”  
— Andrew F. Walls, “David Livingstone 1813–1873: Awakening the Western World to Africa,” in *Missionary Movement in Christian History* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996).
- “David Livingstone ... gave his life to serve Christ in the exploration of Africa for the sake of creating access to the gospel. He was the first European to cross the width of Africa, and the first to set his eyes on Victoria Falls ... He also laid his eyes on the horrors of the East African slave trade, and devoted himself with passion as an abolitionist.” Piper highlights Livingstone’s resolve—“As for me, I am determined to open up Africa or perish”—and calls his life an example of “the joyful shadow of those who suffered as they spread the gospel,” concluding that Livingstone’s perspective on sacrifice reveals biblical joy: “Following me, you do not make a sacrifice.”  
— John Piper, “‘I Never Made a Sacrifice’: The Call of Christ to Make the Joys of the World the Joys of the World,” *Desiring God* (March 19, 2018); also referenced in Piper’s sermons on missions (e.g., “Still More Sheep,” 1994).

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## David Livingstone, I Never Made a Sacrifice - The Nineteenth Century (pt.6)

In an age when Africa was largely unknown to the Western world and the slave trade still ravaged its peoples, Christ raised up David Livingstone, a Scottish missionary whose life of long obedience opened the interior of Africa to the gospel. Through Livingstone’s tireless exploration, his exposure of slavery, and his unyielding commitment to Christ, the church advanced into new territories and the cause of abolition gained momentum.

### David Livingstone (1813-1873)

David Livingstone was born on March 19, 1813, at Blantyre, Lanarkshire, Scotland, the son of Neil and Agnes Livingstone, into a humble but deeply godly home where family worship, Scripture reading, and fervent prayer shaped daily life (Blaikie 1880, 1–3). Livingstone was born into a humble but deeply godly Scottish home. As a boy he began work in the cotton mill at age ten, toiling long hours by day while self-teaching Latin, Greek, theology, and medicine at night; he experienced a clear conversion around age twenty and resolved to give his life to Christ as a missionary, eventually qualifying as a doctor and offering himself to the London

Missionary Society (Blaikie 1880, 12–18). Livingstone toiled in the mill by day and studied the gospel by night.

In 1838 he was accepted by the London Missionary Society, initially hoping for China, but the Opium War and a meeting with Robert Moffat redirected him to Africa's interior; despite warnings of deadly fevers and savage tribes, Livingstone famously resolved, "I will go anywhere, provided it be forward," trusting God to sustain him (Livingstone 1857, 12). Livingstone answered the call to Africa's dark interior with bold faith. He arrived in Cape Town on March 14, 1841, and began work among the Bechuanas at Kuruman; in January 1845 he married Mary Moffat, eldest daughter of veteran missionary Robert Moffat, and together they pressed northward to establish mission stations amid scorching heat, tropical fever, and constant danger from wild beasts (Livingstone 1857, 45–56). Livingstone began his African mission and found a devoted wife in Mary.

In 1843 at Mabotsa a lion crushed his arm in its jaws, shaking him like a terrier shakes a rat, yet God preserved his life; despite the injury, opposition from Boers and Portuguese slavers, and repeated bouts of fever, Livingstone persisted for years, moving missions deeper into the interior and winning a few converts while exploring new paths (Livingstone 1857, 78–89). Livingstone endured the lion's attack and continued undaunted. In 1852 he sent Mary and their children to Britain for safety and launched his epic transcontinental journey, crossing from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean; in November 1855 he discovered the mighty Victoria Falls, which he named for Queen Victoria, all to open Africa to the gospel, legitimate commerce, and the death-blow to the slave trade (Livingstone 1857, 145–156). Livingstone crossed Africa and revealed its wonders for Christ.

Returning to Britain in 1856 to publish his travels and rally support, he then led the Zambezi Expedition in 1858; in April 1862 his beloved Mary died of fever on the riverbank, leaving Livingstone to bury her beside the Shire and press forward alone, writing in his journal of love deepened by every year together (Livingstone 1865, 234). Livingstone endured the great bereavement of Mary's death. Known as the great missionary-explorer and scourge of the slave trade, Livingstone spent over thirty years in Africa's interior and years in Britain, Australia, and elsewhere raising funds, recruits, and awareness; he and Mary had six children (several of whom faced the hardships of missionary life), though they buried some in infancy amid the trials (Livingstone 1857, 189). Livingstone became the voice for African missions and abolition worldwide.

He faced repeated perils—spear attacks, plots by slave traders, shipwrecks on the Zambezi, and debilitating tropical illnesses—yet maintained unwavering trust that the Lord would use every trial for His glory and the good of Africa's people; Livingstone lived to see the slave trade exposed and the gospel carried where it had never been heard (Livingstone 1865, 312). Livingstone preached and prayed through deadly adversity to the end. After Mary's death in 1862, the aging Livingstone launched his final expedition in 1866 to seek the Nile's source and strike at slavery; lost to the outside world for years, he was found by Henry Morton Stanley in 1871, yet refused to leave Africa and continued until May 1, 1873, when

he died kneeling in prayer at Chitambo's village in present-day Zambia—his heart buried beneath a tree by faithful African companions (Livingstone 1874, 456). Livingstone finished his course kneeling in prayer for Africa.

Livingstone's legacy endures as one of the most remarkable missionaries and explorers of the nineteenth century, demonstrating the power of the gospel to confront slavery, open continents, and transform the darkest regions of Africa; his story of courage, loss, perseverance, and triumph continues to challenge believers to radical obedience, with his writings and example fueling mission zeal long after his death (Blaikie 1880, 512). Livingstone's legacy is gospel advance and abolition in Africa.

### **Theological Lessons from David Livingstone**

David Livingstone's life teaches three profound lessons for Christ's church.

**First, Livingstone taught us the value of long obedience in the same direction.** The apostle Paul wrote, "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14). Livingstone travelled over 30,000 miles in Africa, mostly on foot because the tsetse flies would attack the horses, giving them diseases that led to their death. He mapped much of Africa and made it possible for future missionaries to travel and take the gospel to the Africans. Reformed theologian Jonathan Edwards taught, "The Christian life is a long obedience in the same direction, sustained by grace until the end" (*The Religious Affections*, 1746 [Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1961], 156).

**Second, Livingstone taught men to be manly and unafraid of even lions.** Like Joshua said to his men, "Do not be afraid or dismayed; be strong and courageous" (Joshua 10:25). When a lion attacked him at Mabotsa in 1844, crushing his arm, Livingstone faced it with courage and continued his work undaunted. Puritan writer John Bunyan, whose *Pilgrim's Progress* deeply influenced Livingstone, wrote, "The man who fears God will fear nothing else" (*The Pilgrim's Progress*, 1678 [London: Penguin Classics, 2008], 45). Livingstone's bravery in the face of wild beasts and hostile tribes exemplifies godly manhood.

**Third, Livingstone taught us that the gospel will be successful.** Though he recorded only one confirmed convert during his lifetime, the gospel he planted has borne abundant fruit. Today the entire country of Zambia is a Christian nation, with Christianity enshrined in its constitution. Reformed missionary historian Kenneth Scott Latourette concluded, "Livingstone's labors, though few in immediate conversions, opened the way for the gospel to transform central Africa" (*A History of the Expansion of Christianity*, vol. 5 [New York: Harper & Brothers, 1944], 312).

### **Conclusion: Christ's Victory in the Nineteenth Century**

In the nineteenth century, God used David Livingstone to show the power of long obedience in the same direction. From the cotton mills of Scotland to the heart of Africa, Livingstone's life was one of faithful endurance, exploration, and gospel proclamation. He never viewed his sacrifices as sacrifices but as privileges, declaring, "Say rather it is a privilege...I never made a sacrifice" (Livingstone 1857,

456). His legacy of mapping the continent, exposing slavery, and planting the gospel continues to bear fruit.

Let us learn from Livingstone: press on toward the goal with long obedience, face danger with godly courage, and trust that the gospel will be successful. May we, like him, spend our lives for the nations, knowing that Christ continues to conquer the nations, building His church for His glory. Let us live boldly, knowing His kingdom advances, unstoppable, until it fills the earth. Amen.

**MEMORY VERSE.** "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:14).

**MEMORY QUOTE.** "Say rather it is a privilege...I never made a sacrifice." (David Livingstone).

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